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Editorial

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- 1 Despite the extremely tense situation, the CRFJ continues its research and educational activities with its seminars and fellowship programs enabling scholars to work with their Israeli counterparts and take advantage of the archives.
- 2 Unfortunately, on the counsel of our governing body, we were forced to postpone the conference slated to celebrate the 50th anniversary of what eventually became the CRFJ and we hope to replace it by a one-day workshop on October 28, which will present an overview of work accomplished and provide a forum for proposals for the future.
- 3 From Belorussia to Ethiopia to India, researchers associated with the Center have, alongside our Israeli colleagues, conducted highly sophisticated investigations of communities which remain poorly known and above all mistreated for many years by historiography. The latter point in particular is what Claire Le Foll analyzes in her book on three great artists from among these 'Jews from the Cold'.¹ In her article in this issue, the function of Jewish history in Western and Russian culture is too often reduced to a series of pogroms or legends that are "Chagalized", and often poorly translated. It is clear that the way in which this history is written says volumes on those who wrote it and those who read it. The problems begin as they often do by questions of geography, borders and partitioning. It is worth noting that the first chair of Jewish history at Columbia was a historian of Russian Judaism, and it would be fascinating to study the history of this type of Diaspora, and discover how and who were awarded the first chairs of Jewish Studies.
- 4 Martine Chemana associates historical and linguistic scholarship with a genuine art form, which forms her dual subject, blending religion and folklore. Along with the Ben Zvi Institute and the Department of Musicology of the Hebrew University, she is attentive to a dual cultural identity – Hindu and Jewish – its history in Kerala and its fate in Israel. Such issues of cultural heritage are crucial since these traditions are rapidly disappearing.
- 5 Olivier Tourny, who was associated with the Center for many years, is also motivated by the drive for preservation and we salute his new affiliation with the CNRS. His article also

illustrates the prolongation of certain projects initiated by Frank Alvarez-Pereyre and Simha Arom. Once again a bouquet of fields – ethnology, Hebrew, musicology and linguistics – are needed to collect increasingly rare documents, analyze them, have them performed, recorded and produced. This article also provides a brief glance into laboratory work and is as much a discourse on method as a description of the pleasures of research. Ethiopian Judaism, which was in the limelight for many years, clearly deserves the attention it has received. The Center, along with several Israeli universities, will hold a conference in 2004 for the centenary of its discovery by Jacques Jaitlovitch: in 1904 that this scholar made his virtually initiatory journey to these improbable communities.²

- 6 Lastly, three reports on workshops in which the Center played an active part conclude this issue of the Bulletin.

NOTES

1. Claire Le Foll, *L'école artistique de Vitebsk (1897-1923). Éveil et rayonnement autour de Pen, Chagall et Malevitch*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 2002.

2. Contact Lisa Anteby-Yemini at the CRFJ and Haim Admor, Fonds Jaitlovitch, University Library of Tel Aviv University, POB 39038, Tel Aviv 61930, Israel

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